1: Herskovits E-4, 6 (1934) 1937 SV3 Haiti SV3
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both town and district are bisected by the main route between the capitals of the Haitian and the Dominican republics. Yet, once again, this geographical nearness but distorts the psychological distance between Mirebalais and the metropolis. For though the busses, converted from camions, pass to and from the coastal city several times a week, the valley and even the town which is its center drowse in essential isolation. A few hundred yards off the main road find the Haitian peasant following the mode of life of his forebears, oblivious of events outside the valley. Only for a few of the *notables* of the town, the *gros nègres*, who have personal, political, or business contacts with Port-au-Prince, is the comparative proximity to the capital meaningful.

It is not possible to say how long this valley has been inhabited. Certainly the early Indians roamed there; and there, as in other parts of the island of Hispaniola, the tragedy of their extinction under the brutality of early Spanish rule must have taken place. Moreau de St. Mery, to whom all students of Haiti must acknowledge a debt of gratitude for his painstakingly accurate reports of life on the island, gives the derivation of its name.

> "Mirebalais received its name," he says, "because of the enormous numbers of wild animals the first Frenchmen found there, which recalled to them the small district in the region of Poitou [in France], called Mirebalais, where some of them had probably first seen the light of day. These quadrupeds, first introduced by the Spaniards, had no difficulty in multiplying there after the Indians had disappeared from their native land and the Spaniards, reduced in numbers, were obliged to abandon the great plains, so that horses, cattle, etc. came to exercise exclusive domain."[1]

St. Mery's work, which traces the development of Mirebalais as one of the parishes of pre-Revolutionary Haiti, makes it

1: Herskovits E-4, 8 (1934) 1937 SV3 Haiti SV3
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steps to " feed " his *loa* in order to satisfy it, for it is more important to give offerings to the spirits than to dance for them. He therefore either quietly prepares a sacrifice of cereals and liquor in his own room or sends money home so that his *loa* may be " fed " at the family habitation, and his absence explained to it.[21]

When *vodun* deities are discussed in Mirebalais, most often two " companies " of them are mentioned, the Rada and the Pétro " squads." In one list of gods that was obtained, the word *Rada*, derived from the name of the ancient principality of Allada in Dahomey, called forth the explanation " *qui veut dire Dahomey* — which is to say, Dahomey," though it should be made clear that neither the words *Rada* nor *Dahomey* are any longer recognized in Haiti as place-names, being today simply qualifying designations of *loa*. There are regional differences in the number and ranking of other categories of gods that hold no important place in Mirebalais. The existence of these other categories is, of course, well known, and one person referred to " the seventeen and twenty-one classes of *loa*," of which, however, only the following were named: Rada, Pétro, Dahomey, Guinée, Congo, Nago, Ibo, and Wangol. Of these the Congo and the Ibo gods are well known, though their worship is chiefly restricted to individual families, while the Nago and Dahomey categories, though significant from the point of view of indicating African origins, are most commonly grouped under the term *Rada*. Guinée also occasionally figures in worship as carried on in individual families, but this term is more often understood as a general designation for all *loa* outside the Rada, Nago, Congo, and Ibo groupings and for certain Pétro gods. Wangol derives from the geographical entity Angola.

From comparatively early times the impression has been given that certain of these classes of gods perform only good, and others evil. Nothing could be further from the truth than this attempt to read European concept into Haitian ideology,

3: Leyburn Z-4, 5 (no date) 1966
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[p. 1-A]

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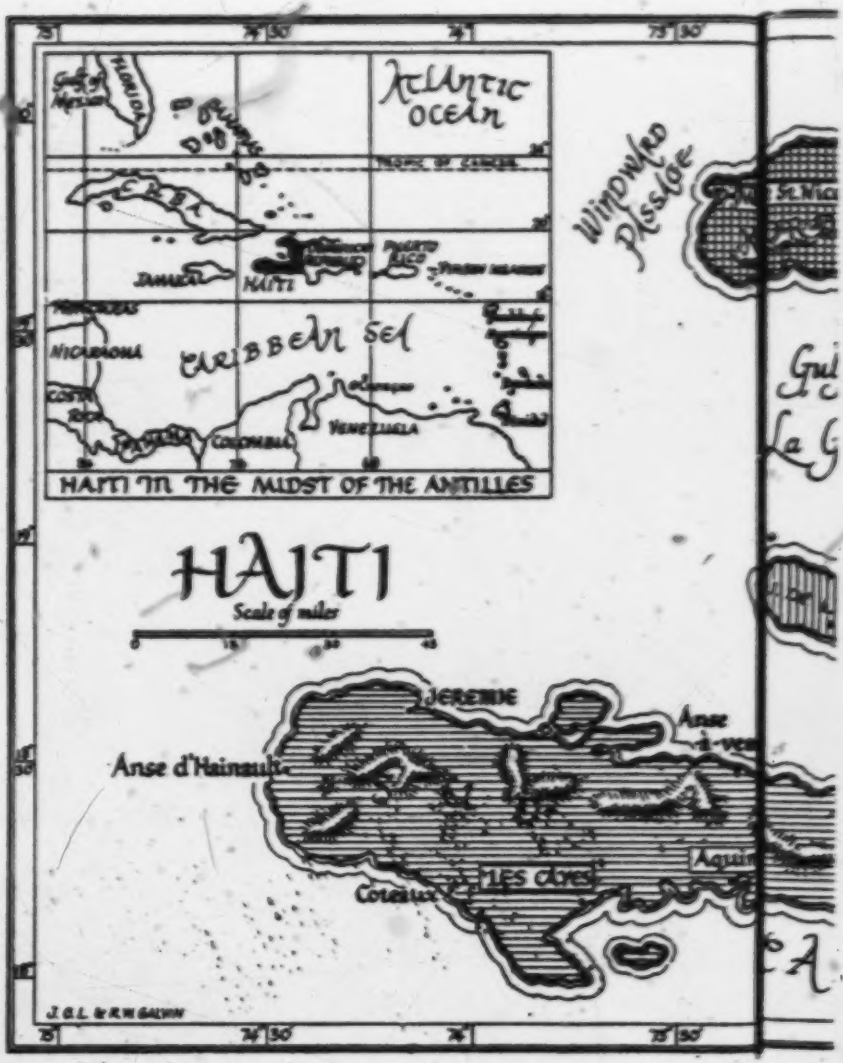

3: Leyburn Z-4, 5 (no date) 1966
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[p.1-B]

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3: Leyburn Z-4, 5 (no date) 1966
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In every commune recognized by the state was an important

official appointed by the president—the *juge de paix*. The term has little relation to our "justice of the peace." It implies rather the function performed by the old English country squire, who often by his prestige managed to patch up differences between neighbors without allowing matters to come to an issue, but who if the issue were joined sat as judge. The decision of the judge was final in all civil matters up to fifty dollars—and the case was rare in which peasants dealt in affairs as large as this. In the more populous communes (those containing large villages or towns) the juge de paix was more impersonal. He might render decisions, subject to appeal, in cases up to a hundred dollars. All minor police cases came within the province of this official, whose judgment was final in matters up to a twelve-dollar fine or a jail sentence of five days. All criminal cases began with this judge, but those of the gravest sort were speedily sent to higher courts.

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By and large rural Haiti got along with a minimum of civil government, and urban Haiti was governed much as a small provincial town of the nineteenth century.

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Several communes made an arrondissement, another political subdivision with a distinct military cast. Through most of her history Haiti had an average of about twenty of these arrondissements, each of them presided over by an army officer of high rank appointed by the president. In arrondissements containing important capitals a general, in lesser ones a brigadier-general, exercised both military and civil authority. This man was the medium through which the central government made known its decisions and laws. Because life could be tedious in a dull country town, in a district full of peaceful peasants, many of the generals spent their time in reflecting upon the chances of a successful insurrection which might make them important in national affairs. As already noted, the standard of discipline in the army was never very high, so that the presiding officer of an arrondissement might have a real sinecure if he was not ambitious.[1]

631
701

1. The military arrondissement always bore the name of the principal town or village within its borders. The following list shows the important places during the time of Boyer:
In the department of the North there were five arrondissements: Cap-Haïtien, Grande-Rivière, Marmelade, Fort Liberté, Limbé.
In the Northwest, three: Port-de-Paix, Cap Nicolas Môle, Le Borgne.
In the Artibonite, three: Saint-Marc, Gonaïves, Miragoâne.
In the West, three: Port-au-Prince, Jacmel, Léogane.
In the South, five: Les Cayes, Jérémie, Aquin, Tiburon, Nippes.

[631]
[701]
[103]

3: Leyburn Z-4, 5 (no date) 1966
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175 439 648

recognition to the kingdom specifically failed to pay him proper respect. Moreover he seized the property of American merchants in his kingdom to make good a sum of $123,955.19 he could not recover from a Baltimore firm.[6] Agriculture flourished in the North, but the English were not yet certain whether Haitian credit could be trusted. The demand of the traders for cash was allowed, and so with almost no risk British dealers supplied the steady demand for staple trade goods,[7] taking in return either coffee and sugar or the equivalent in cash.

175 439

Christophe was chary of publishing any specific figures on the economic life of his kingdom: we have no way, therefore, of estimating either the annual production or the annual income. One of his statesmen, Baron de Vastey, affirmed that in 1817 more than 150 ships were supplied with cargoes of coffee and sugar at the Cape alone.[8] This number is equal to that which sailed from the port during its most peaceful and prosperous periods in colonial times; one suspects the baron of exaggerating. We know, however, that Christophe was the chief merchant in his kingdom, setting his own prices and disposing of his own goods before others could sell; we know, too, that he left a large fortune in his coffers when he died.

175 579 439

Like Dessalines, King Henry Christophe had his pirates, and redoubtable ones. But he warned them to prey only on French ships bound for ports in Pétion's republic in the South; he did not wish his trade interfered with in the North.

The policies of Dessalines and Christophe were personal, based upon their subjective prejudices and preferences; those of Pétion were more in accord with the practice of other civilised nations of the time. They had to be, perforce, in view of the economic and political position of his republic.

175 439 648

Southern Haiti had never, even in colonial times, been so intensely cultivated as the North. Foreign traders were accustomed to deal at the Cape, now the capital of Christophe's dominion, while Port-au-Prince was but a secondary market. After the civil war Christophe had practically allied himself with Great Britain. If this coup were to be counterbalanced, Pétion would have to choose for allies among

6. See Ludwell L. Montague, *Haiti and the United States, 1714–1938*, p. 48.

7. Christophe did not encourage his people to purchase any of the extravagantly rich manufactures of Europe, but rather to keep their wants simple.

8. Formerly Cap François, then Cap-Haitien, but under Christophe renamed in his honor Cap-Henry; it is now Cap-Haitien.

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104 GLOSSARY--definitions of native terms frequently used in the sources; orthographies and transliteration systems. See also:
Word lists and vocabulary. 108

1: Herskovits E-4, 5 (1934) 1937 SV3 Haiti SV3
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APPENDIX III

NOTES ON THE TEXT

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(Citations to sources give only the last name of the author, and a large roman numeral in parentheses following a name indicates that more than one title published by this writer has been used as a reference; as: "Dorsainvil (II)." Volume numbers of works in more than one volume are indicated by small roman numerals; as: "St. Mery, ii." The arabic numerals which follow are page designations.)

INTRODUCTION

1 St. Mery, ii, 229.
2 Ibid., 238–9; Charlevoix, ii, 414–22.
3 St. Mery, loc. cit.
4 Ibid., ii, 237–8.
5 Stoddard, Ch. X, XII.
6 Edwards, iii, 84.
7 St. John, 41–2; Ardouin, 20–1; de Vaublvc, 367.
8 Mackenzie, ii, 122.
9 Dorsainvil (II), 100–11.
10 Mackenzie, ii, 111–13.
11 Dorsainvil (II), 204–5; Mackenzie, ii, 67.
12 Furnished through the courtesy of M. Jacques Antoine, of the Legation of Haiti in Washington.
13 Davis, 218–23; also occasional comments in Craige and Wirkus.
14 St. Mery, ii, 243–4.

CHAPTER I

1 Charlevoix, ii, 458–9.
2 St. Mery, i, 23 ff.
3 Ibid., i, 34.
4 Ibid., i, 28–34.
5 This has been remarked by Dorsainvil (I), 153; see also Herskovits, M. and F. (IV), 117–35.
6 Cf. Herskovits (II), passim.
7 Cf. Herskovits, M. and F. (I), passim.

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APPENDIX IV

GLOSSARY OF CRÉOLE TERMS USED IN THE TEXT

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NOTE: The orthography employed in this book to render Créole terms has retained French spelling except where this is confusing to the English-speaking reader (so that, for example, *oué*, "to see," from *voir* is written *wé*, and *ouanga*, "evil charm," given as *wanga*), or where obvious African derivation makes phonetic spelling desirable (as *vodun*, "voodoo," instead of *voudou*; or *hungan*, "priest," instead of *houngan*). In such cases, vowels have the so-called "Continental" values.

acansan, an African dish which figures in offerings to the *loa* as well as in the Haitian cuisine.

açon, calabash rattle used in sacred dances.

action de grâce, a ritual comprising prayers and hymns of the Catholic Church which precedes any service for the gods of the *vodun* cult.

adjanikon, a male initiate in the *vodun* cult; also pronounced *unjanikon*.

adoration, song sung at *vodun* rites or ceremonies of the cult of the dead when offerings of money are given the officiant.

arrêt, a magic charm to ward off evil; see *drogue, garde*.

asagwe, a figure in *vodun* dances saluting the gods.

avalou, a dance of the *vodun* cycle marked by pronounced movements of arm- and shoulder-muscles; also pronounced *yanvalou*.

azeto, a witch or werewolf; see *loup-garou, mauvaise aire*.

baguette, drumstick.

baigneur des morts, the functionary who bathes the dead and watches over the body.

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baka, an evil spirit actuated by a *loa* which commonly takes the form of some animal when carrying misfortune to the one against whom it has been directed; an evil spirit who acts as emissary for the one who has entered into a compact with it; see *engagement.*

bal, name for any European type of dance.

bamboche, generic term used to denote a recreational dance; often employed in Mirebalais to designate a serious *vodun* dance by those whose only participation in it is social.

banda, an African type of social dance.

barrière, an entrance-way; the guardian of the *barrière* is Legba.

basilique, a tree whose leaves are used in making infusions employed for medico-magical purposes.

bassin, a deep pool in a stream, the favorite residence of water-spirits.

bocor, practitioner of magic.

bois, tree; also called *pié bra.*

borné, to "restrain"; the action taken to prevent a malign spirit from inflicting harm on the person or family to whom it has come.

bossal, wild, untamed, unbaptized; used particularly for any spirit or object in the *vodun* cult prior to its consecration.

boucan, bonfire; the designation "buccaneer" derives from this word.

bula, the smallest of the trio of *vodun* drums.

caille, house; *caille mystères,* house where gods of the *vodun* cult are worshipped.

calebasse, a gourd; an African type of social dance.

calenda, an African type of social dance.

canarie, earthenware jar; *loa nan canarie,* the spirit of an ancestor rescued "from under the water."

caplata, a minor practitioner of magic, good or bad; employed as a term of derision.

cérémonie, a complex of rituals of the *vodun* cult; see *service.*

chef d'esquade, a man at whose behest others come to do co-operative agricultural labor.

chewal, ch'wal, horse; idiomatically, the devotee of a *loa:* the deity "mounts" his "horse" when possession occurs.

clairin, raw rum.

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combite, co-operative work-group; similar to but not as formally organized as the Société Congo of other portions of Haiti.

commère, godmother; a term of derision for male homosexuals.

compère, godfather.

Congo, region of Africa, the name of which, in Haiti, is used for a "company" of *vodun* deities; name of a social dance.

connaissance, knowledge of curing and the control of supernatural forces conferred on their devotees by certain *vodun* deities.

coup de main, a small co-operative work-group.

couvert sec, minor offerings to *vodun* deities which do not include any animal sacrifices; synonym for *mangé sec*.

Créole, native to Haiti; applied to gods, human beings, and plants.

Dahomey, an African kingdom; in Haiti, name given *vodun* deities.

démon, evil spirit; male counterpart of *loup-garou*.

dernière prière, final prayer for the dead, which is made nine days after the funeral. See *novena*.

directeur, one who supervises the work of a *combite*.

dosu, the child born after twins.

drogue, a powerful magic charm which protects its owner against all inimical forces falling in a specific category, such as war or arrest. See *garde, arrêt*.

engagé, bondsman; white man who in pre-Revolutionary times repaid passage to Haiti by working for a given number of years on a plantation.

engagement, compact entered into between a man and a supernatural power, which binds him to fulfill exacting obligations in return for a fixed reward; always a matter of evil magic.

farine Guinée, "flour of Africa" — powdered ash used in *vodun* rites.

gammelle, a large wooden vessel used in preparing and serving food.

gangan, an important *vodun* priest; also pronounced *n'gan*.

garde, protective charm, operative in specific cases. See *arrêt, drogue*.

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● 104 *gourde*, unit of Haitian currency, at one time the equivalent of the French franc, and now stabilized at twenty cents United States currency.
Guinée, Africa.

habitant, peasant.
habitation, farm, plantation; center of relationship group.
haut chant, song saluting a *vodun* deity, usually of the warrior group.
humfort, " temple " of a *vodun* priest.
hungan, priest of the *vodun* cult.
hunsi, initiate in the *vodun* cult.
huntôr, spirit of the *vodun* drums.

Ibo, an African tribe of eastern Nigeria whose name has been given a group of *vŏdun* deities.
image, chromolithograph of a Catholic saint.

job, word taken from English to indicate a task one is paid to perform.
jok (*mal jok*), evil eye.

kanzo, ordeal by fire; *hunsi kanzo*, a member of the *vodun* cult who has passed through this ordeal.
kembe, to seize, to harass; used of a supernatural power or of the dead.
koklo, chicken.
kola, a sweet, non-alcoholic drink.

lambi, conch-shell horn.
lavée tête, ceremonial washing of the head when a *vodun* spirit is to be baptized; any ritual or healing washing of the head with ingredients sacred to the gods.
lettre de demande, a written proposal of marriage.
loa, deity of the *vodun* cult; see *saint*, *mystère*.
loup-garou, *lou'gawou*, werewolf; female counterpart of *démon*.
lutin, ghost of unbaptized child.

macoute, peasant's carrying basket.
magie, magic; usually employed in the sense of black magic, as

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against the term *traitement* for healing magic, and *arrêt* or *garde* for protective magic.

maison de servitude, house where worship of family *vodun* gods is centered.

Mait', master; employed in connection with supernatural powers, as *Gran' Mait'*, God; *Mait' 'Bitation*, Master of the Habitation; *Mait' Carrefour* (*Calfu*), Master of the Crossroads; *Mait' Gran' Bois*, Master of the Great Forest; *Mait' Source*, Master of the Stream; *Mait' Tête*, Master of the Head, or the ruling deity of a *vodun* initiate.

majeur, term of derision employed for shirkers at a *combite*.

malangan, a type of yam.

malheureux, unfortunates; applied to those who are poor, but not in abject poverty.

mamaloi, priestess of the *vodun* cult; a term not employed in Mirebalais.

mambu, priestess of the *vodun* cult.

mangé, a sacrifice; to eat; *mangé sec*, equivalent of *couvert sec* (q.v.); *mangé marassa*, sacrifice for the spirits of twins; *mangé morts*, feast for the family dead; *mangé moun*, idiomatic usage to denote the action of a spirit who "eats" his victim by sending fatal illness or death-dealing accident.

manman, mother; the largest drum of the *vodun* trio; the most important peg of a *vodun* drum.

manuba, a European style of dance in which only males participate.

marassa, twins; spirit of twins; one of the forces making up the supernatural universe of the Haitian.

mariage, marriage in the Church, in contrast to *plaçage*, or mating not given ecclesiastical sanction.

marré, to tie; used to denote proper control of a *vodun* deity by its devotee; *marré corde*, to make charms.

marron, runaway; wild.

marronage, state of freedom attained by Negroes who fled the plantations in pre-Revolutionary times.

Martinique, an African type of social dance especially favored at rites for the dead; name for entire cycle of social dances which follow rites for the dead.

mauvaises aires, synonym for *loup-garou* (q.v.).

mazon, an African type of dance performed as an interlude in a *vodun* dance.

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mira, a small work-group.

morts, dead; one of the three forces invoked whenever the supernatural powers of the voduist believer are being called or fêted.

mystères, African gods; synonym for *loa* and *saints*.

n'âme, soul.

Nègre, Negro; *gran' Nègre*, a person of outstanding spiritual power; *gros Nègre*, a wealthy and powerful member of the community.

neige, dew.

notable, an important member of the community.

novena, a nine-day rite for the soul of one recently dead, held on the nine nights immediately following the funeral, and completed by the *dernière prière* (q.v.).

occupation, a task; especially a task set a malign spirit to be performed before he can work his evil deeds; that is, a task impossible to perform.

ogan, iron used to sound the basic *vodun* rhythms, consisting usually of the blade of a hoe struck by a spike.

pannier, saddle-bags of basketry used by peasants to transport produce.

papaloi, priest of the *vodun* cult; term rarely employed by Haitians themselves, but favored by non-Haitian writers; see *hungan*.

pauvres, the destitute members of a community.

penitence, special dress worn to fulfill a vow made to one or several deities of the *vodun* cult, or in accordance with a desire expressed by the gods; usually made in the colors sacred to the gods.

Pétro, a group of *vodun* deities; the designation is said to be derived from the name of a powerful *vodun* priest of pre-Revolutionary days.

plaçage, type of socially sanctioned mating which does not have Church approval; opposite of *mariage* (q.v.).

placée, a woman taken as a mate without a Church wedding.

point, oblique reference to a person or situation in conversation or song; a magic charm.

porto cabesse, the central post of the *tonnelle* (q.v.), down which

1: Herskovits E-4, 5 (1934) 1937 SV3 Haiti SV3
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the *vodun* gods are believed to make their entrance into the dancing-space and where they remain until they are invoked; also termed *porto mita*.

prêt' savanne, " bush-priest "; an officiant at *vodun* rites and at services for the dead who reads the prayers of the Church.

Rada, name of a " squad " of *vodun* deities principally of Dahomean and Nigerian derivation; the word itself is a corruption of the name of the Dahomean town of Allada.

rade, dress; *rade de penitence*, robe of penitence (see *penitence*); *rade tambou'*, " dress " placed on a *vodun* drum.

renvoyé, term applied to the ritual of " banishing " a *vodun* deity who has been troubling a family.

saint, as in English, saint of the Catholic Church; also applied to the gods of the *vodun* cult, in which usage it is a synonym for *loa* and *mystère*.

seconde, the middle drum of the *vodun* trio.

service, term applied to any non-Catholic ritual for *vodun* gods, for twins, or for the dead that is not a dance.

simidor, a singer of songs; especially a man who leads the singing at *combites*.

Société Congo, a closely organized co-operative work-group found in certain parts of Haiti which corresponds to the loose grouping called *combite* in Mirebalais.

'ti moun, child; institution of quasi-adoption of children.

tonnelle, temporary thatched shelter for *vodun* dances.

traitement, healing by means of herbs and magic charms.

trône, the altar at a *vodun* service.

vagabond, term of opprobrium, more insulting than in English.

verver, symbolic designs for the gods traced on the ground by the *vodun* priest in white flour and ashes.

vien-vien, ghost.

vodun, " voodoo "; a complex of African belief and ritual governing in large measure the religious life of the Haitian peasantry; in a more restricted sense, a type of dance.

wanga, a charm that works evil magic.

1: Herskovits E-4, 5 (1934) 1937 SV3 Haiti SV3
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● 104 *zesse,* an African type of dance.

zombi, soulless being who becomes an automaton for the enrichment of a sorcerer who had " killed " him and after burial had recovered the body to set it to work without respite and without needs or desires, until the day " set by God " arrives for the natural death of this being.

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4. Notes on Orthography

104 197 87 114 [212] The problem of putting the Creole language into writing has confronted Haitian and non-Haitian scholars and writers for some time. During the past decade the problem has been an acute one for education authorities in Haiti. While there developed a consensus that teaching the largely illiterate population would have to be done in Creole and not in French, there remained a controversy about the system of orthography that should be used. One of the first attempts to teach Haitian children in their own language was made by Christian Beaulieu, a Haitian educator who worked out a written method based on traditional French orthography.[1] Subsequently, a simpler system was devised by a clergyman, the Reverend H. Ormond McConnell. Although it had numerous detractors among those who favored French orthography, it was found to be far more suitable for educational purposes. The American linguist Robert A. Hall, Jr., carried out a study, the findings of which supported the McConnell method as "perfectly phonemic and at the same time wholly practicable in that it uses only characters already available in print shops and on typewriters."[2]

104 [114] Some Creole texts from Haiti and other West Indian islands, taken down by researchers and scholars, have been transcribed in the McConnell orthography, or in a modified one known as the McConnell-Laubach system. It is my opinion that although the system is admirable for teaching purposes, and adequate for recording texts for scholarly needs, it is a disadvantage to a reader who has a French vocabulary at his command but who is not familiar with the McConnell orthography. The extent to which this system can disguise a language is easily seen if it is used, for example, to transcribe Jamaican speech. The effect is identical on French words or words of French origin. The Haitian proverb "Run from the rain, fall into the big river" is written by Hall in the McConnell-Laubach orthography: ***Kouri pou-lapli, tòbé nâ-grd***

1 [UNESCO, The Haiti Pilot Project, P. 39. Cf. P. 355, Category 116. -- Analyst]

2 [Ibid. Cf. P. 355, Category 116. -- Analyst]

rivière.[2] A system which permits recognition of the original French words would transcribe the proverb: *Couri pou' lapluit, tombé nan grand rivière.*

In this book, I have in the main used the semi-French forms. Regardless of the status of Creole as a separate language, a great part of its vocabulary is drawn from French, old or modern, and it has seemed unnecessary to disguise the connections of Creole with its antecedents. Nevertheless, I am aware that some of my orthographic choices coincide more with the McConnell-Laubach system than with the Gallic, and some may appear to belong to neither. I hope, however, that my transcribed texts will be easily read.

In most sociological and anthropological reports on Haiti which include texts the transcriptions are based on modified French orthography. Nevertheless, there have been many inconsistencies and contradictions, as there well may be within the covers of this book. One reason may be an inadequate understanding of the Creole language. A second reason can be, and often is, differences of pronunciation in various regions.

But the most significant differences occur in setting down words of non-French or probably non-French origin. One of the more noteworthy of these is *Vodoun*—a very important word without which it would be very difficult to write of Haitian life. Writers and anthropologists have spelled it in the following ways: Melville J. Herskovits—*Vodu* and *Vodun;* George Eaton Simpson—*Vodun* (after an earlier trial of *Vódoun*); Odette Mennesson Rigaud—*Vodou;* Milo Rigaud—*Voudoo;* Robert A. Hall, Jr.—*Vaudoun;* Selden Rodman—*Vaudou;* Maya Deren—*Voudoun;* Eugène Aubin—*Vaudoux.*

Still other variations are to be found, particularly in the early literature on Haiti. In view of the general lack of agreement on this matter, it is not difficult to defend my own choice of *Vodoun* (French phonetics), which I used in previous writings.

Other important words which have numerous spellings are *hounfor* (*hunfor, humfor, hunfort, humfort, houmphor,* etc.), *hounsi* (*hunsi, hounçi,* etc.), and the names of various loa.

[2] [Hall and others, Haitian Creole, p. 199. Cf. p. 355, Category 116. -- Analyst]

2: Courlander B-5 (1937-1955) 1960 SV3 Haiti SV3

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[P. 356 is blank]

Glossary

CREOLE TERMS USED IN TEXT

Abobo or *ai bobo*. A ritual singing phrase meaning "the end."

Agida. A bowed drumstick used on the middle-sized Arada drum.

Ago. An exclamation in Vodoun songs signifying "I am here."

Alfor cousin. A woven straw knapsack, from the Spanish *alforja*.

Arrête. Protective magic.

Asson. The cult priest's ritual rattle with external strikers.

Assot. A board used for striking as a percussion instrument.

Assotor. The largest drum of the Arada rites.

Badji. Altar.

Badjican. Keeper of the altar.

Baguette guinée. A grotesquely twisted drumstick.

Baka. (1) A kind of evil demon. (2) Name of the larger Pétro drum.

Baksor. Another name for the asson.

Bamboche. A "good time" dance.

Bambóché. To dance or have a good time.

Banza. Formerly a stringed instrument resembling a banjo or a trough zither. The name is now used for a fiddle.

Basse. A finger drum resembling our tambourine.

Bassin. A pool, usually referring to a special pool sacred to a deity.

Batonnì. Stick dancer.

Bébé. Baby, used to designate the smallest of the Vodoun drums.

Bizango. A form of *loup-garou* seen in the form of a dog.

Bocó, or *bocor*. A cult priest, one who works with magic as well as with the loa and the dead.

Bois bourrique. A bamboo trumpet, also known as *vaccine*.

Bondieu. God.

Bossale. Wild. A *hounsi bossale* is an "untamed" hounsi; a *loa bossale*, an "untamed" loa.

Brulé sin, or *bouillé sin*. "Boiling pot," the name of a ritual in which the hounsi is elevated to the rank of kanzo.

Bula. (1) The smallest drum of the Arada rites, also called *bébé*. (2) A verb meaning to play this drum.

Bulatier. Drummer of the *bula*.

Caco. A bandit, or a mercenary soldier who hires himself out to political adventurers. Sometimes known as a *machete*. Numerous revolutions were accomplished with armies of cacos.

Caille. (1) House. (2) The Haitian version of the game known in West Africa by such names as *wari* and *mungalla*.

Canarie. A clay water vessel.

Canzo. The rank of hounsi whose loa have been "tamed" or controlled.

Capla. Another name for the houngan.

2: Courlander B-5 (1937-1955) 1960 SV3 Haiti SV3

● 104 *Carré.* A type of *coumbite,* or community work group.

Carreau. A measure of land, about three and one-third acres.

Cata. To beat the basic rhythm for a song or dance.

Catalier. The one who *catas.*

Cayambouque. A container with a tight-fitting lid made from a large gourd or calabash.

Cha-cha, tcha-tcha, or *kwa-kwa.* A small gourd rattle used for keeping time for singers and drummers.

Chardette or *chadèk.* Grapefruit, grapefruit tree.

Chimin dleau. "The water road," by which loa come to and depart from the scene of a service.

Clairin. An alcoholic drink.

Claves. Wooden sticks which are beaten together as a percussion instrument.

Clochette. The tiny hand bell of the houngan, used along with his asson.

Cocomacaque. A kind of dwarf palm. Sticks made of this tree are called by the same name, or sometimes *baton cocomacaque.*

Connaissance. "Understanding." Used to indicate a houngan's mastery of his profession.

Corvée. A variety of coumbite, identical with the *carré.*

Couis. A bowl made from a half gourd or calabash.

Coumbite. The community work gathering which shares planting, harvesting, weeding, housebuilding, and other tasks.

Coundjaille. The name of a dance. It signifies "fast" or "agitated."

Criche. An earthen water bottle.

Debois. A marionette seen during carnival days.

Démon. A variety of malevolent demon.

Déssounin or *déssound.* The rite of dispossessing a loa from the head of a deceased person.

Diné machete. "Machete dinner," a kind of coumbite.

Diri. Rice.

Divineur. One who divines, used for houngans.

Djab. A kind of demon.

Djablesse. A female ghost or demon.

Djaillé or *djaille.* Excitement motions, tension, in the religious dances.

Djévo. An inner room of the hounfor.

Doça. The first child born after twins, if it is a girl.

Docteur fé. Leaf doctor, pharmacologist.

Doçu. The first child born after twins, if it is a boy.

Dourant jou'. An early morning coumbite.

Drogue. A drug or magical potion.

Dundun. A name sometimes given to the smallest Arada drum.

Engagement. A compact with a demon.

Escorte. An association of loa, related or otherwise, who assist each other in their work.

Expedition. Aggressive magic in which a loa or a spirit is sent out by a houngan to work against some person.

Frete cache. Cracking the whip before the Pétro hounfor to "wake up" the loa.

Gage. Games played by children, usually with the objective of making someone "it." Sometimes used as synonymous with Last Prayers or Nine Night, when children play gage games.

Gamelle. A long wooden bowl used for washing clothes or for storing.

Garde corps. A protective charm, often worn by the owner.

Garde habitation. A charm devised to protect a household and its surroundings.

Gembo. A decorated shell devised to slide on a cord, used by houngans for divining.

Govi. An earthen or glass bottle in which loa and spirits are kept in the hounfor.

Grage. A sheet-metal scraping device used in secular music.

Grand famille. The eldest person in the family.

2: Courlander B-5 (1937-1955) 1960 SV3 Haiti SV3

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Grand gout. Hunger. *Moin grand gout,* I am hungry.

Grisgris. A bird used for the making of charms, etc.

Grondé. (1) Grumble. (2) Middle-sized Arada drum.

Habitant. A farmer.

Habitation. A farm.

Hounaié. Another name for a loa.

Hounfor. The Vodoun temple or shrine.

Houngan. The Vodoun priest.

Houngénicon. One of the assistants of the houngan.

Hounsi. The servitors of a loa.

Hountogri. Another name for the largest of the three Arada drums.

Hountor. (1) Spirit of the drum. (2) The largest Arada drum.

Jouconjou or *joucjou.* A battery of gourd rattles carried on a pole.

Jugement de baguette. A system of divining a guilty person through the use of a rod.

Kwa-kwa. Another name for the *tcha-tcha,* or common gourd rattle.

Lacour. A group of dwellings inhabited by related families. A hamlet.

Lailé. The swirling of the skirts in a dance.

Lambi. A conch or conch trumpet.

Lampion. The metal candelabra carried by marching bands at carnival time.

Langage. This word usually refers to the "tongues" spoken by the houngan or possessed persons during Vodoun rites. It may mean language in the ordinary sense also.

Laplace. Chief assistant of the houngan.

Lavé tête. A ritual for removing a loa from a person's head.

Loa. The spirit or deity which possesses people during religious rites.

Lou-garo. Loup-garou.

Lutin. The spirit of a child that died before receiving baptism.

Mabouya. A small ground lizard.

Machete. The long all-purpose work knife. See *Caco.*

Magic. Magic.

Maît' conte. A "master" or professional storyteller.

Maît' tête. The loa who resides in one's head.

Major jonc. The baton or machete juggler of the Rara troupe.

Makanda. A specific kind of aggressive magic.

Maljok. Evil eye.

Mambo. Vodoun priestess.

Mambo caille. One of the assistants of the houngan.

Mangé. (1) To eat. (2) A feast.

Mangé assotor. Feast for the assotor drum.

Mangé diri or *goulé diri.* A rice harvest festival.

Mangé loa. A feast for one or more loa.

Mangé maraisa. Feast for twins.

Mangé mort. Feast for the dead.

Mangé yam. A yam harvest festival.

Manman. (1) Mother. (2) The largest of the Arada drums.

Maraisa. (1) Twins. (2) The spirit of twins.

Marimba, malimba, manimba, marimbula. The modern Haitian version of the African thumb piano.

Marré loa. To "tie" a loa, that is, to prevent him from entering one's head.

Mayemba. A gambling game using four chips for heads and tails combinations.

Mayo or *manyo.* A special shirt worn to counteract the evil eye or some other magic.

Mayoyo. A battery of rattles carried on a tall pole in some Congo services.

Metté n'ime. The process of restoring a soul that has been taken from a body.

Morts en bas dleau. The spirits of the dead "below the water."

Moune. Man, person.

Moyen. The middle-sized Arada drum.

Mwé, moin, or *m'.* I, me.

Mystère. Another name for *loa.*

2: Courlander B-5 (1937-1955) 1960 SV3 Haiti SV3

104 ***Nanchon.*** Nation. Usually refers to a "nation" of deities, such as Anago, Ibo, and Pétro.

Orkan. A musical salute to the loa, or to an important personage present at a service.

Ogan. The metal percussion device that accompanies the Arada drums. Traditionally, a forged iron bell, but it may be a hoe blade or any other piece of resonant iron or steel.

Ounga. Aggressive magic.

Ouvri bayè pou' moin. "Open the gate for me (us)." Addressed to the loa Legba, to make contact with the other deities possible.

Papaloi. A term sometimes used to designate the Vodoun priest. A corruption of the Yoruba *babalao.*

Passage d'alliance. A method for divining a guilty person by means of a ring suspended on a string.

Passé. (1) Surpass. (2) Pass.

Passé balé. A method for divining a guilty person by the use of a specially prepared chair.

Parillon. The court of the hounfor.

Payé sorti. The gift that is given to a Rara troupe when it stops to play before a man's house. Literally: "Pay-to-go."

Pé. Altar.

Peristyle. The roofed court of the hounfor.

Pierre-loa. The stone in which a loa is believed to reside.

Pierre manman. A large, rounded stone regarded as a super-loa stone and a protector of the *habitation.*

Pingé. A form of wrestling that is seen at Rara time.

Piquette. A spear or sharpened stick.

Piston. Any instrument resembling a trumpet.

Plaçage. The system of polygamy practiced by some peasants.

Plaçée. A second or third wife of a man under the system of *plaçage.* The first wife may be *plaçée* also.

Po'teau mitan or ***po'teau planté.*** The center post of the hounfor court, around which most of the rites take place.

Pot tête. Another name for *govi.*

Pouin. A form of protective magic.

Prêt' savane. "Priest of the plains," or "bush priest." This may have been originally *prêt' savant,* "learned priest." The functionary who reads or recites Catholic prayers in a Vodoun service.

Rara, or ***lara.*** The rural Lenten festival. The word *rara* is also used for a wooden noisemaker.

Rafraichi tête. A ritual bath for refreshing the loa in one's head.

Reposoir. A small area, sometimes surrounded by a low wall, sacred to a deity.

Retiré n'âme. The act of removing the soul from a body.

Revenant. The troublesome spirit of a dissatisfied dead person.

Roi Lwalwadi. "King of Lwalwadi." Title given to the leader of a Rara troupe.

Ronde. A form of coumbite.

Rubaniers. Maypole dancers.

Samba. The singing leader of a coumbite.

Servi dé main. To serve with two hands. That is, to work with the loa of the Arada and Pétro "nations," or to work with the loa and with aggressive magic at the same time.

Similor. The singing leader of a coumbite.

Siro'. A sweet drink.

Société. A society. Refers usually to the association gathered around a cult temple, or an agricultural work group.

Tafia. An alcoholic drink.

Taille bas. "Low hips." A dance posture.

Tambour. Drum.

Tambourine. "Mosquito drum." A miniature two-headed drum.

Tambour maringouin. An earth bow, or a portable model of the earth bow.

Tambouyé. Drummer.

Tchancy. A metal rattle used in Rara and in some Congo rites.

Ti baka. (1) Little demon. (2) Name of the small Pétro drum.

2: Courlander B-5 (1937-1955) 1960 SV3 Haiti SV3

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Ti kanmbo or *ganbo*. Bamboo stampers, used as a substitute for drums.

Tonnelle. The covering of the hounfor court.

Trois-sept. A card game.

Tuyé-lèvé. Witchcraft in which the practitioner kills someone, then takes him out of the grave, restores him to life, and makes him a servant or slave.

Tymbale. A large cylindrical drum with heads at both ends.

Vaccine. A bamboo trumpet; also known as *bois bourrique*.

Vèvè. The meal or flour drawing made by the houngan on the ground.

Vodoun. (1) Rites and beliefs of the Arada "nation." (2) Rites and beliefs of all the cults except those of non-African origin. (3) A loa.

Von-von. A bull-roarer.

Wari. A large inedible red bean or seed. Also the name of a game in which *wari* beans are used as playing pieces. See *Caille*.

Woy, woille. An exclamation.

Yamingan. A curative medicine bundle.

Zandolite. A small climbing lizard.

Zange. Another name, used regionally, for loa.

Zeauberaps. According to lore, a society of cannibals.

Zin. The iron pot used in Vodoun ritual. It may, on occasion, be of clay.

Zombie. A creature supposedly disinterred from the grave, dispossessed of its soul, and made to work for a malefactor.

Zozo bef. A leather whip used on horses and burros. Literally "bull penis."

3: Leyburn Z-4, 5 (no date) 1966
SV3 Haiti SV3

[p. 113]

INTRODUCTION

IF the visitor to Haiti is first struck by the wide separation between the élite and the peasant masses, the person who knows Haiti only through books is sure to think of it as a country of Voodoo. There is no error of fact here, for Voodoo is characteristic of Haiti. Nevertheless, what the American conjures up in his mind when he uses the word is almost certain to be misleading. In spite of detailed reports of anthropologists the average American clings firmly to his notion that Voodoo is Negro superstition chiefly concerned with charms or spells to "hoodoo" (a variation of the same word) an enemy. Scientists rarely succeed in correcting long-held but incorrect or one-sided impressions of the meaning of terms; they end rather by inventing a new word, or else continue the generally losing fight for precise usage, and so preserve the confusion.[1]

Since there is small likelihood of eradicating the inexact connotations of "Voodoo," many recent anthropologists have adopted such spellings as Vodun, Vodou, Vodoun, Vaudou, and Vodûn, all renditions of local pronunciation of the same term. *Vodun* (pronounced Vo-doon) has been chosen for use in this work, in the hope that readers will bear in mind that the folk religion is not mere idle superstition. A grasp of the real and distinctive religious beliefs and cult practices of the Haitian is very necessary to an understanding of the social picture.

Like its caste system, the religious life of Haiti presents far-reaching contrasts. The only approved religion of the country is Roman Catholicism. To this faith all the élite who are religiously inclined, or wish to pay formal homage to the institution of religion, belong. No Protestant sect has ever gained a real foothold in Haiti. Catholic churches are among the imposing edifices in every town; Catholic priests are an everyday sight as they go about their parishes; Catholic brothers and sisters, with state support and approval, direct much of the higher education in the country.

1. Witness in anthropology the contrast between the popular and the scholarly meaning of *culture*, *race*, *taboo*, and *fetish*; in chemistry of *reaction* (as when a man is asked his "reaction" to an opinion); in psychology of *instinct*, *innate*, and *inherent*; and in sociology of *caste*, *institution*, and *social*.

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105 CULTURAL SUMMARY--synopsis of the whole culture (as a background for specific information); references to summaries in other works. See also:
Cultural history . . . . . 17 Ethos 181

1: Herskovits E-4, 5 (1934) 1937 SV3 Haiti SV3
Mirebalais

114. It is interesting to speculate just why the life of the Haitian peasant, and, indeed, within the last decade, of the educated city dwellers, thus became a subject for lurid description. In its most honest manifestation actual misunderstanding or naïveté has undoubtedly been the cause; or it may be inferred that certain of the pictures drawn have been dictated by prejudice or by international political considerations. Finally, and within recent times most frequently, writers have seemed deliberately to distort and sensationalize their materials in order to attract to their work a desired notoriety.

The effect of this constant stress laid on the African cults in describing Haitian life has been not only to throw the entire picture badly out of focus, but to distract attention from the equally interesting phases of Haitian society which concern the everyday life of the people. Almost nowhere, aside from pre-Revolutionary eighteenth-century writings, can information be had about the workaday world. The rituals that accompany birth and death, the social and economic values that prevail, characteristic institutions such as the market or co-operative work-groups — one searches in vain for other than cursory mention of these in the later accounts. Even where a writer has included a discussion of such a co-operative organization as the Société Congo on the Isle à Gonave, emphasis is almost exclusively laid on its picturesque ceremonialism. Mention, it is true, is at times made of happy, "child-like" (the favored adjective), normal Haitians in the few pages that recent books have devoted to daytime activities. But with the dusk the "booming drums" are made to sound and the mysteries are again called upon to divert the reader.

114 105 182 Yet how are these descriptions of a hysterical, paranoid folk, ridden with fear of the dark forces of magic and the anger of vindictive gods, to be reconciled with the picture of the Haitian as he is shown in the second section of this book — of a man going about his affairs in matter-of-fact fashion, tending his crops, buying and selling, carrying on his amorous

1: Herskovits E-4, 8 (1934) 1937 SV3 Haiti SV3
Mirebalais

conquests, establishing and providing for his family? The answer is that such a reconciliation is unnecessary where religion takes its place beside other interests and activities and where, psychologically, the supernatural world is on the same plane as the natural one, having its dangers as nature presents dangers, but also offering its compensations as do other phases of existence.

Investigations of native life such as this one not only require generous financial support, but have need of the sympathetic understanding of those in a position to extend helpful practical aid and advice in the field. To the many persons and institutions whose co-operation made this study possible, it is a privilege to record here my appreciation. Initial support of the work and later appropriations for preparing the material for publication were had from the Social Science Research Councils of Columbia and Northwestern Universities; while a grant-in-aid from the American Council of Learned Societies permitted the recording of songs in the field; and another from the National Research Council allowed motion pictures of motor behavior to be taken — films from which a number of the accompanying illustrations have been derived. Concepts relating to the problem of the results of contact between peoples possessing different customs, habits, and beliefs — a principle objective in the long-term program of research on Negro cultures of which this work in Haiti constitutes but a part — were sharpened through the discussions I have been privileged to have with my associates on the Committee of Acculturation of the Social Science Research Council, Professors Ralph Linton, Robert Redfield, and Donald Young.

Official aid in Haiti could not have been more generously accorded. The sympathy of His Excellency President Stenio Vincent, and M. Jacques C. Antoine, chief of the presidential secretariat in 1934 and at present Secretary to the Legation

1; Herskovits E-4, 5 (1934) 1937 SV3 Haiti SV3

[History of Haiti in 17th-18th Centuries
The Haitian White Population]

affable, generous perhaps to the point of ostentation, confident, brave, a sure friend and a good father" [39] — such are his good points as set down by one who was perhaps surer-eyed than others in seeing his deficiencies, though these traits seem to have concerned more his relations with his fellow-whites than those which affected his bearing toward his Negro slaves.

The young Créole women of this same environment were destined for early marriage — too early for their best development, whether physical or mental. Given to exacting the fulfillment of their slightest caprices, they were, like their men, creatures of passion. If they survived their first pregnancies, which as a result of too early marriages often came before they were physically in condition to support the rigors of childbirth, they soon lost their youthful allure and became the unattractive women of the type so maliciously described by the Comte de C***.[39] In such cases they frequently survived not one but several husbands. Their associations were chiefly with their Negro women slaves, who were full confidantes, sleeping in the same chamber with their mistresses and on occasion sharing informal meals with them, though they never ate at the same table. And because, by a fine turn of irony, these Negro women were often at the same time the concubines of the husbands, brothers, or sons of their mistresses, they were as often as not treated alternately with the greatest tenderness and the harshest brutality.[40]

Whatever the inner life of white Haitians, native-born or Créole, outward ostentation was the rule. In the cities poorly furnished houses were cared for by a numerous retinue of uniformed retainers; "the supreme achievement for a European being to have himself served, he hires slaves while he waits for the time when he can own them." [41] In the country, too, life was lived on as lavish a scale as possible. This is not the place to describe the houses of masters and slaves, or the buildings needed for working sugar-cane or indigo or preparing coffee, or their distribution over the plantation, for nu-

1: Herskovits E-4,5 (1934) 1937 SV3 Haiti SV3

[History of Haiti in 17th-18th Centuries—
The Haitian White Population]

175 merous contemporary accounts, and most present-day works,
105 give both texts and illustrations which make the economy of
563 the plantation clear.[32] Though many stories of the magnifi-
569 cence of plantation life are found in current works, writers
342 of the period seem to agree that but little attention was paid
to convenience. Inventories of the contents of houses show
175 that furnishings were at a minimum; a few chairs and small
105 tables in the sitting- and reception-rooms, beds and minor ac-
563 cessories in the way of furniture in the bedrooms, dining-room
352 tables and chairs and a cabinet for dishes. These pieces were usually built in the colony and made of native hard woods; substantial, they were essentially plain. As Baron Wimpffen remarked, "Taste, Sir, is still Creolian at Saint Domingo; and, unfortunately, the Creolian is not the right taste, — it smells too much of the *Boucan*."[33]

175 The table set was not distinguished. Meat, though the most
105 important dish at the principal meals, was poor, but, on the
569 other hand, fish, game, and wild fowl were excellent, and the
563 best of French wines were available.[34] Whatever the fare, how-
342 ever, it was served in the grand manner, often on plate rather
352 than chinaware, and by the many liveried house-servants which every great establishment could boast. An account of the mode of service has been preserved in the reminiscences of one who, writing some years later of a repast served him in 1787, says: "There were many more of these domestics of both sexes than there were diners. I could but admire their attention to the smallest details of the service, the whiteness of their clothing, and the beautiful kerchiefs in the Créole manner
291 elegantly arranged about the heads of the women. . . . But all of them moved about on bare feet; this was the distinctive sign of slavery."[35]

175 As portrayed in contemporary works, Haitian white life is
181 seen to have been lived entirely in terms of material goods and
105 of display. Just as there was little intellectual life, so religion
771 was but a matter of form. One M. de Larnage, writing from
563

1: Herskovits E-4, 6 (1934) 1937 SV3 Haiti SV3

[History of Haiti in 17th-18th centuries—The Haitian white population]

Petit-Goave on 25 June 1743, complains that it is unbelievable "what indifference the people of these districts have toward spiritual matters." [44] So little attention was paid to the rites of the Church that when the baptism of an infant was to be performed, it often proved difficult to find a godfather who had taken the sacrament, and many children were therefore never baptized. As might be expected, the churches were in a bad state, often having no more than earthen walls and floors, roofed with thatch, and being used as threshing-floors as well as places of worship. The description which Père Labat has given us of a church at Cap Français,[45] and of the manner in which the communicants conducted themselves during such services as were held, shows the decadence of the one religion that had any place among the white inhabitants. The clergy, too, reflected this same decadence. For though the early libertines who posed as priests were later replaced by members of such orders as the Jacobins, the Jesuits, and the Capucins, even this did not end the scandals that, from the first days of the establishment of the Catholic Church on the island, marked its ministrations.

What impression must the Negroes have obtained from their opportunities to observe the life of their masters? What patterns of behavior, what moral codes, what concepts of the way in which the Europeans regulated their own lives and, as officials, regulated the lives of others, must have been stamped on the minds of these Africans? That the present emphasis on the importance of wealth, or that a love of and demand for display, should characterize Haitian life of the cities today is not strange. Nor is it difficult to comprehend how certain other aspects of Haitian life that have so been underscored in the last half-century by those who have written of the Haitians should have developed from this initial stimulus — not to the extent to which this emphasis would lead one to believe, to be sure, but enough to give a basis for the exaggerations which have been published.[46]

1: Herskovits E-4, 5 (1934) 1937 SV3 Haiti SV3

[History of Haiti in 17th - 18th Centuries]

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Some of these charges may be reviewed. One, frequently met with and already mentioned, concerns the general lack of cleanliness and sanitation that marks the cities. As has been shown, this stems directly from the patterns of life which prevailed under French control. The matter of personal morals is also often discussed with anything but praise for Haitian custom. Quite aside from the polygamous tradition of Africa, the influence of which will be discussed later, it is only necessary to recall the example set for these slaves by the sex customs of the Créoles and other Europeans with whom they came into contact to see how the ideal of monogamic union would not be entirely convincing as one to be followed in all its implications. The failure of the Catholic Church to stamp out the African cults in Haiti, and the skepticism with which, as will be pointed out, the motivation of the priests is regarded by the Haitians must have been strengthened by the tradition of the misbehavior of those who were in charge of the religion into which baptism was mandatory, before the days of freedom.

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The instability of Haitian political life, and the venality of judges and other officials have been stressed again and again in the writings of those who have passed judgment on Haiti. Yet one need but read of the readiness of the white colonists to revolt against the authority set over them by the mother country,[39] and of the manner in which during the French Revolution attempts to alleviate the position of the colored and Negro portions of the population were thwarted by the illegal political activities of the plantation slave-owners,[40] to understand at least some of the sources from which direct political action derives its sanctions. One need similarly but read comments in letters and books of the time concerning the corruption of the officials of the colony [41] to conclude that, since her independence, Haiti has in such respects but continued a tradition set by the rulers who governed the country before the Republic was established. Thus if the life of the Haitian

1: Herskovits E-4, 5 (1934) 1937 SV3 Haiti SV3

[History of Haiti in 17th - 18th Centuries]

Negro peasant of today presents aspects of harshness or instability, it would seem proper to ask how much of this might be ascribed to the examples which these Negroes were set by their masters, rather than unequivocally to assume inherent racial tendencies to account for them, as is so often done.

This, of course, is far from the whole story. For just as there were large numbers of colonists who were men of integrity and lived in accordance with the best traditions of their French heritage, so among the Negroes were many who sensed these deficiencies in the regime to which they had been enslaved, and held tenaciously to their African traditions, not only in religion, but in social, economic, and political phases, so that, when the time was ripe, these might in some measure be re-established. To approach the matter realistically, it must be recognized that just as the Africans in the islands represented numerous tribes having varying customs, and individual members of these groups possessed varying degrees of integrity and worth, so the French who came to live there and whose slaves learned of French culture from them represented not necessarily the flower of that culture, but were in the main derived from the extremes of French society, the unadjusted and maladjusted lower classes and the aristocrats. What was bequeathed by them to the Haitians, therefore, were those aspects of French civilization which, to the extent that they were accepted by the Negroes, are partially responsible not only for the graciousness, the hospitality, and the generosity of the Haitian of today, but also for the less pleasant aspects of the culture that have resulted from his historical development since independence.

2: Courlander B-5 (1937-1955) 1960 SV3 Haiti SV3

fires in their houses at night to keep out the damp cold that sweeps through the passes. And a man on the trail before dawn may wear a blanket over his head and carry a glowing ember with him for warmth.

On the south coast there are sometimes hurricanes and tidal waves, and many a small fishing boat and grass-covered house has been washed away in these storms. But the great mountains of the southern range deflect the winds, so that to the north their full fury is never known.

In the great Bay of Gonaïves the fishing boats sail out at night with the friendly winds that carry them to the fishing grounds of the island of La Gonave, and they return to the shore with their catches in the morning, or in the afternoon with the setting sun. The sailing boats from the tiny fishing village called Ville Matelot each day pass the deserted islet named Isle à Cabrit, where four Indian camps once stood. Today Isle à Cabrit is only a waterless, denuded place, a hunting ground for Carib and Arawak pottery and carved stone images.

In the frontier lakes of the Cul-de-Sac Plain there are wild ducks and alligators. Here the villagers fish with nets from rafts and dugout canoes. Now and then an iguana is seen, but there is little other game, because the edible wildlife of the country was long ago eaten by hungry people.

For the things that grow wild the Haitian is grateful—the avocado, the mango, the cashew, and the cotton which once planted produces again and again each year. He is grateful for the coconut palms, the calabash tree, the gourd vines, and the medicinal herbs that grow on every side. But the gifts of nature are not prolific. Most of the great stands of timber—lignum vitae, mahogany, dyewood and pine—have been cut away. Once fertile garden spots have dried up, and the soil that produces the yams, the pumpkins, the kaffir, and the rice is tired.

But the Haitian himself is not tired. He has suffered from malaria, yaws, and chronic hunger; yet out of the great old mountains of Haiti he has fashioned a way of life and a nation.

The Haitian of today was created out of the fabric of three continents—Africa, America, and Europe. He was shaped out of the plains and hills of Nigeria, Dahomey, and the Congo; the summers and winters of Europe; and the mountains and mountain mists of Haiti itself. He is the synthesis of the folk beliefs of the French and Spanish peasants, the Yoruba and the Arada of West Africa, and perhaps of the Carib Indians with whom he had close contact during his first days in the New World. He has brought into affinity the religious practices of Africa and the beliefs of the Church of Rome. He is outwardly simple and poor, but inwardly he is a complicated and rich man. He is rich in music, in the capacity for spiritual expression, in tradition, in folklore, and in memories. He has been able

2: Courlander B-5 (1937-1955) 1960 SV3 Haiti SV3

to marry work to play, drudgery to singing, and despair to hope. In his complicated world, life and death are simply different aspects of the same thing. Those who die live as long as people remember them. And those who are alive in the physical sense are receptacles for the spiritual forces that exist on all sides—the echoes of the dead, the multitude of spirit beings, good and evil, and dancing and music.

What are the origins of this simple and complicated man?

The beginnings of the Haitian came with the discovery of America and the establishment of slavery in the New World. When the Spanish colonizers first began to organize the economy of the new colony of Hispaniola, as they called it, they attempted to enslave the indigenous Caribs to work the fields. But the Indians of Haiti found no sense and no comfort in the new system. It violated their views of life and destroyed their culture. They were proud, and they were not resilient. They did not care to pan gold for the Spaniards or to grow sugar for them. They died under the conditions of slavery, or fled into the mountains, or took to the sea in their canoes, looking for sanctuary on other islands where the Europeans had not yet settled. They left the rich earth of the Haitian valleys to the conquistadores. In less than eighteen years the new Spanish colony was dying on the vine for lack of laborers. It was then that Spain, like France, England, and Portugal, turned its eyes to Africa. There were old precedents. The Spanish and Portuguese had for many years used the African for labor. They had had intimate contact with Africans during the Moorish invasion of Iberia. And the slave trade had been an old and familiar thing even before the discovery of America.

The first Africans sent to Haiti arrived there in 1510. The precise origins of these first African immigrants to the New World are not known, but they came from somewhere along that long stretch of African coast between Senegal and Angola. It was a great crossroads in world history. As much as any other ethnic group, these Africans and those who came after them built America. They, as much as any other, turned the West Indies into a prize over which the nations of Europe fought for three hundred years. And in Haiti, as in Brazil, the United States, and other American nations, they raised moral and ethical issues for the peoples of European stock which have not been solved to our own day.

The acquisition and transportation of slaves is an old and familiar story. Slavery was an ancient institution in some parts of Africa. Some of the wars between kingdoms were, in part at least, huge slave raids. In other wars, the taking of slaves was only incidental. But the selling of these human chattels to European merchants came as easily to African chieftains as it did to Arab entrepreneurs. Often they were merely selling off

3: Leyburn Z-4, 5 (no date) 1966
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very favorable reception by Haitian scholars and intellectuals. As its author and others have pointed out, few countries in modern times have received as bad a press at the hands of foreign observers as Haiti. A small, rugged nation, born of an exhausting and destructive revolution, its people poor, disease-ridden, illiterate, and erratically led, independent Haiti gives the impression of having drifted aimlessly for more than a century. Observers from "more developed" lands have had a field day—and still have—bemoaning the evil consequences of a mass of African slaves having turned on their French masters to destroy them and their works. It is still fashionable to allude to Haiti in deploring independence movements, racial desegregation, indigenous political leadership, and economic sovereignty. But too little scholarship has since been invested, as Leyburn invested it, in delineating the national and international forces which have operated to keep Haiti poor and backward. Nor has contemporary research led to sufficiently revealing comparisons between the social history of Haiti and that of her more colonial neighbors in the Caribbean area. Leyburn's work enhanced the possibilities for such comparisons and drew some morals which Haiti's detractors often ignore; but in making his case, the author carefully avoids lapsing into romanticism, or into the inaccuracy born of uncritical sympathy.

The book was published as the final steps were being taken to end the official United States presence in Haiti. The occupation had begun in 1915, ostensibly to restore order in a situation marked by political chaos. Haitian defaulting on debts to the French and Germans had raised the specter of foreign—that is, European—occupation, which created considerable North American anxiety; and there were large Haitian debts outstanding to United States banks as well. When the United States decided to move militarily, the abstract issue of justice was ignored, to be raised for contemplation only after the occupation itself was a fact. Military occupation continued for nineteen years, and the complete termination of United States controls over the national affairs of Haiti did not come until 1946, long after Leyburn's book had appeared. Twenty-five years have now elapsed since Leyburn wrote, and the events of these years are relevant to any retrospective view of the author's interpretations.

Much, indeed, has happened in Haiti since 1941: the United States withdrawal and the fading of the effects, both good and bad, of the occupation; the positive economic consequences for Haiti of World

3: Leyburn Z-4, 5 (no date) 1966
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War II and its aftermath, and the subsequent dissipation of those gains; the "social revolution" of January 1946, ushering in the Estimé regime; the boom in the arts and tourism, and their later contractions; the rise and subsequent fall of the Magloire government (1950–56), and the uneasy interregnum that followed it; and finally, the growth of the Duvalier monolith.

Over the span of those years, social science literature on Haiti has increased significantly, and outsiders, as well as the Haitians themselves, can now know much more about the country and its people. But some of the most important questions raised by Leyburn's book remain substantially unanswered. *The Haitian People* is a classic because its author phrased so well the major issues in the growth of Haitian national institutions, and no subsequent work is likely to supplant it in this regard. But its value has been heightened over the years by the lack of any equally penetrating analysis dealing with the period since 1941 or specifying the relative importance of various institutional forces in the contemporary structure of Haitian society. Thus, for instance, much too little is known of the culture and social organization of Haiti's predominantly rural population, in spite of considerable anthropological research since 1941. More detailed studies of the rural economy are particularly necessary, both to assess developmental possibilities and to understand better the relationship of rural sectors to the national economy. Sociological and economic analyses of folk religion—*vodoun*—are wanting, even though psychological and descriptive studies of this religion have appeared in large numbers. The general conceptual problem of community definition, structure, and organization, which has long plagued students in the Caribbean area, has been barely raised in the case of rural Haiti. Finally, our understanding of Haitian class structure, both local and national, and its corollaries in economic, political, and social institutions, is still slight. Here the need for more research seems particularly acute, since no adequate grasp of the nature of Haitian society at large will be possible until the fit of the rural sectors with the national class structure is better known. On this understanding, among others, may hinge the likelihood of success of any future developmental effort in Haiti.

It was with Haiti as a nation that Leyburn dealt in his book, and his analysis of national institutions and social structure excited more comment and reflection within Haiti itself than any other part of his

3: Leyburn Z-4, 5 (no date) 1966
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Modern usage, having borrowed the word "caste" from India, employs it loosely to mean a rigid class system of which the people are conscious.[4] In India caste was always endogamous and connected with occupation. Kroeber defines it as "an endogamous and hereditary division of an ethnic unit occupying a position of superior or inferior rank or social esteem in comparison with other such subdivisions."[5] Castes, as distinguished from social classes, "have emerged into social consciousness to the point where custom and law attempt their rigid and permanent separation from one another." By each of these criteria Haiti has castes.

The élite are endogamous in that they would not consider marriage into the masses. The one exception to the endogamic practice is marriage with a white foreigner. Whereas in India all members of a caste had the same general occupation, in Haiti several occupations are open to caste members; but the distinction between honorable and demeaning work is understood by all, so that no person has free choice as regards the two larger categories. Haitian law does not name the social divisions, nor does it legislate the masses into a subordinate position[6]—for the simple reason that there is no conceivable need to enact what already exists. The laws of Haiti are administered by élite officials; these men make the definitions and interpretations. The judge always knows the custom, so that (as in most countries) the same offense brings different penalties for upper- and lower-class offenders. Custom holds sway, and custom is more tyrannical than any body of law.

Inside the castes may be found social distinctions familiar in democracies and in every other kind of society. Interest in politics, business, literature, or sport draws people of like minds together and makes cliques. There are well-to-do families who outshine their neighbors, just as there are peasant landholders who dominate their rural communities. A high civil official has more prestige than a doctor with a small practice, just as among the masses a house servant for an élite family outranks a beggar.

For the majority of Haitians, life is too elemental to be concerned with artificial wants. The peasant talks, unfettered by rules of gram-

4. See also W. Lloyd Warner, "American Caste and Class," *American Journal of Sociology*, XLII, No. 2 (Sept. 1936), 234-237; and John Dollard, *Caste and Class in a Southern Town* (New Haven, 1937), pp. 62 ff.

5. A. L. Kroeber, "Caste," in *Encyclopaedia of the Social Sciences*, III, 254.

6. Such efforts were made, however, in the early days of the republic. See chap. III.

3: Leyburn Z-4, 5 (no date) 1966
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mar or any schoolmaster's correction; he behaves like his fellows; he learns by trial and error, by imitation, by the praise and ridicule of his elders, what to do and what not to do. What really matters in life is having food to eat, avoiding bad luck in health and crops, having a wife and family, keeping on the right side of the spirits, and being able at night to dance, sing, and tell tales with his friends. He wears no tight-fitting clothes, never bothers about fashions, certainly never puzzles his brain to reconcile his theological and philosophical views with each other. This is by no means a poetic or idyllic existence for him, however. The peasant is so poor that misfortune may be catastrophic; the soil he has to farm is worn out by decades of erosion and crude tillage; disease is so widespread that most people know misery. A man cannot, even if he would, save up for a rainy day; he lacks the necessary implements to plough deep while sluggards sleep. One is safe so long as he does what everyone else does, and if this rule breaks down, at least misery will have company. Keep out of harm's way if possible, but bear it stoically when it comes. Avoid what is strange—particularly all legal documents, courts, politics, city ways, and people who shout orders. The peasant is conservative because radical changes, such as come from revolutions, for example, dislocate his life, leaving him worse off than before. Progress and improvement are to him only vague abstractions, much less real than the struggle for mere existence.

For the élite, on the other hand, life is rather a struggle to maintain and improve the standard of living. It is always easier to predict what a person will not do than what he will. It would be hard to define, therefore, a typical aristocrat. In one basic matter, however, the high-class Haitian is poles removed from the peasant: instead of accepting things as they are ("*Bon Dieu bon,*" runs the peasant saying: God is good—and the inflection of the voice implies that the second "bon" may also mean "inscrutable"), the élite person is restlessly dissatisfied with the conditions of life: economic, social, political. His unexpressed ideal is to be accepted as an equal in the cultured circles of Western society, to have the same entrée to courts, clubs, and parties abroad as cultivated white Europeans and Americans.

Since the country has never had an accurate census, it is not possible to say precisely how many persons belong to each caste. By the most generous estimates not one out of twenty-five Haitians is élite—and such a figure stretches the category to a point which no literate

3: Leyburn Z-4, 5 (no date) 1966
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citizen would admit. The few cities and towns of Haiti do not contain more than 250,000 people in a total population which the atlases generally put around 2,500,000. Since to live in the city is one necessary mark of aristocracy, and since obviously not every town- or city-dweller is an aristocrat, it is probably nearer the mark to infer that not more than two or three per cent of the people are of the élite.

A slightly larger group would fit neither category. This intermediate section would consist chiefly of those who have taken a few steps toward the upper stratum; they may wear shoes and keep a small shop and speak a few words of French, but not yet be accepted in "respectable" society; aristocrats will look down on them while the masses will regard them with curious interest. Yet these are not what Europeans would call a middle class. In their own generation, they are rootless and insecure. Their children will have as many advantages as the parents can afford, so that the next generation may increase the distance between itself and the common folk. Included in this intermediate group are also a few who, having once been up, are now on the way down.

If the terms "masses" and "peasants" are used interchangeably in these pages, it is because the vast majority of the people get their living from the soil. Haiti is, as it has always been, an agricultural country. The end-paper map lists all towns which claim as many as 7,500 people; only one, the capital, Port-au-Prince, has more than 100,000.[7]

At least nine out of ten Haitians, therefore, lead rural lives, and easily fit the designation of peasant. They live in little communities, generally of less than a hundred persons, rather than in scattered houses. A detailed map would be dotted with place names of these

7. The estimates made by Woodring, in his *Geology of the Republic of Haiti*, p. 67, are as follows:

Port-au-Prince	125,000	Saint-Marc	10,000
Cap-Haïtien	20,000	Jacmel	10,000
Les Cayes	15,000	Port-de-Paix	7,500
Gonaïves	12,000	Jérémie	7,500

It should be noted that all eight of these towns, which by Woodring's estimate have a total of 207,000, are seaports. The country is so mountainous that no cities have grown up in the interior. The map also includes a number of towns smaller than 7,500: these are capitals of *arrondissements* or seats of courts. Woodring remarks that if the people who live in towns having a population of more than a thousand were added to the list above, the total "urban" population then would be between 225,000 and 250,000, which is barely ten per cent of the total in the country.

3: Leyburn Z-4, 5 (no date) 1966
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tiny communities, some of them designating "villages" of only four or five houses. For numbers of peasants hidden away in the valleys or on mountain farms, the only contact with the larger world comes through visits to the nearest market town—which itself may count only a thousand souls. The peasant is thus effectively isolated. The American Financial Adviser to the Government has estimated the average *annual* income of the Haitian at $20 a head.[8] The smallness of the sum limits the material contacts of the peasant with the outside world. Rural schools are few,[9] consequently all but a small percentage of the rising generation is growing up illiterate. Lack of mental stimulus completes the isolation. Bound to the soil by the need of wresting a livelihood from rocky, gullied, and increasingly unproductive land, harassed by ill-health, and governed by a group whose own security would be threatened by improving his lot, it is little wonder that the peasant is unprogressive, or that he struggles along at a bare subsistence level.[10]

Haiti is rural and agricultural, then, with a population density of about 250 per square mile. The people, living without machine industry and with very little foreign trade, must get their living from 10,000 square miles, not of lush tropical soil but of rocky, mountainous country which, after a century and a half of poor farming, has been stripped of most of its forests and much of its topsoil.

A glance at a relief map of the West Indies would show clearly that the islands are the tops of a mountain range, whose lowlands were long since submerged by the Caribbean Sea. Looked at from above, Haiti seems a jumbled mass of mountains running in all directions.[11] Down their slopes flow many small streams which after

8. Dr. W. W. Cumberland, cited by Paul H. Douglas, "The American Occupation of Haiti," *Political Science Quarterly*, XLII (1927), 258.

9. The average monthly salary of $13 (until recently only $6) for rural schoolteachers would not draw many wide-awake young men, even if schoolhouses existed for classes. The salary, indeed, is so small that only inferior persons are attracted, often men who know little more than their pupils. See chap. XV, 3.

10. Mrs. Blair Niles, in *Black Haiti* (New York, 1926), pp. 185–186, tells of a prisoner who preferred to remain in jail rather than be freed. "When he gets out," she quotes the officer as saying, "he'll be in again. You'll see. Here he gets nine cents a day for food, an' that's more than the average Haitian ever has."

11. One can well believe the story (told by Ebenezer D. Bassett, *Haiti* [Washington, 1893], p. 3) of the English admiral who, asked by George III for a description of the island, crumpled a sheet of paper, threw it on the table, and said: "Sire, Haiti looks like that." The same tale is told of Puerto Rico, with a Spanish admiral speaking to Queen Isabella.

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it seems not radically to have affected the masses but only the fairly well-to-do.

The *Royal Almanac* for the year 1814 touches proudly upon the moral state of the kingdom. The author of the almanac, the Comte de la Limonade, says: "Great attention is paid to morals and manners. Marriage is honored, protected, and encouraged; no Haitian who is unmarried can fill any place of distinction. Divorce is not permitted." All this was true; yet the mass of Haitians still remained unmarried. Nevertheless, the quotation indicates the extent to which Christophe had gone in his effort to reform marriage and morals among his people; to set them in the European tradition and draw them out of their African and colonial backgrounds.

While Christophe was trying to effect reforms in the North, Pétion was accepting his Southern folk as they were. Hardly a law during his twelve-year administration touches the subject of marriage. The élite colored people continued to make proper legal marriages and so insure the inheritance of their legitimate children. The common folk lived their family lives without weddings, and if property questions arose, custom ruled, backed by public opinion in their little communities.

Such are the backgrounds out of which modern Haitian sex relations have developed. From African tradition came family life, the importance of property to stabilize a union, insignificance of a wedding ceremony, familiarity with matrilineal kinship and descent; from French colonial practice, formal marriage to establish a family with social ambition, casual sex relations for pleasure outside this marriage, the claim of legitimate children to all property (in contrast to folk custom, where few legitimate children were born); from Dessalines, an emphasis upon the African tradition and realism; from Christophe, an insistence upon strict French practice in marriage and in the passage of property.

From among these alternatives Haiti made a choice which is an excellent example of what Keller calls "automatic selection in the mores."[7] There was no congress to select one procedure rather than another. Because Pétion and Boyer followed a *laissez-faire* policy in social matters, the people took the path of least resistance.

7. A. G. Keller, *Societal Evolution* (revised ed., New York, 1931), chaps. IV and V.

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two rooms to house the whole family. "In these huts, filth and every species of uncleanliness prevail, for the people give themselves up to their indolent and lazy habits. It is common to see the pigs and poultry herding with the family."[19]

The furnishings in the huts were as simple as the construction. Rarely was there more than one bed, if that; the children of the family used mats for sleeping. A table, a stool, a couple of patched chairs, calabash bowls, an iron pot or two (and in later days, discarded gasoline tins), comprise the household equipment.

The fine roads of the French régime became rutted and washed, were overgrown with weeds, and soon reverted to wasteland or became nothing more than paths. Carriages ceased to be of any use, and there were few wagons; donkeys and horses became the regular means of transportation, and this was true until the Americans began to build roads again in 1916. The colonial régime had left a legacy of bridges, public buildings, parks, irrigation ditches; practically every improvement of this nature crumbled in slow decay and was not replaced. The temperate Dr. Brown closed his account of the Haiti of 1836 with the following paragraph:

> To sum up all that might be said upon the actual condition of Hayti, poverty and degradation stare one in the face wherever he goes—and the state of the whole island will be fully understood in the United States when it is bluntly asserted, that the country is one continuous negro village, built of mud cabins, and unfurnished with the usual comforts of life. The population is, with small exceptions, an indolent, naked multitude, without sustenance or a disposition to make exertions to obtain it; without enormous vices, but petty and insignificant in every thing relating to human character, and not many removes from the tribes upon the Niger in point of civilization. The fact is indisputable, that as a nation the blacks of Saint Domingo are in a retrograde movement as regards intellectual improvement, and no obstacle seems to exist to prevent this descent to barbarism. The government and institutions of the country must for the present remain unstable, and it is difficult to pronounce what the changes involved in the future will produce.[20]

Progress, as Westerners understand it, comes through contacts and competition, both of which were lacking to Haiti in large measure throughout the whole of the nineteenth century. While externally

19. Franklin, *op. cit.*, p. 396.
20. *Op. cit.*, II, 288–289.

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be given to Haiti for vast rubber plantings.[21] Opposition to Lescot comes chiefly from those who consider him too friendly with the Dominicans who killed hundreds of Haitian workers in 1937, Lescot having figured prominently in negotiations that led to the Dominican government's agreement to pay indemnities to Haiti for the slaughter.

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Reviewing the whole course of Haitian history, the field of politics seems to have marshaled itself behind a few regularities. In every case there have been voices raised to protest, yet the ruling clique, whatever its grouping, has effectively supported these characteristic political customs:

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1. Complete dominance of political life by the president. Strong men seem to be necessary to rule ignorant masses. Even the revolutions precipitated by parties campaigning for parliamentarianism have, when successful, become governments by the president. This concentration of power in one man's hands makes the next revolution possible, for it is easier to overthrow one man than to eliminate a party based upon wide suffrage and diffused responsibility.

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2. The inferior position of cabinet ministers. These have resembled neither European nor American secretaries of state in their responsibilities, but have been little more than clerks appointed by the president to serve as heads of a bureau. The treasurer-general, for example, during most of Haiti's history has merely received the moneys, while the president disbursed them. The secretary-general has neither originated nor conducted the details of public policy. Often as not, the minister has made a convenient whipping boy when the president has got himself involved in internal or foreign complications by demanding the minister's resignation the president remained unscathed.

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3. The unimportance of the legislature. It has made useful patron-

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21. The European War, threatening the supply of rubber coming to the United States from British Malaya and the Netherlands East Indies, has made the American government seek new sources. The Department of Agriculture established an experimental station and breeding gardens for rubber plants in Haiti, and the results were so successful that extensive areas were planted with rubber trees. Haiti and the United States in May, 1941, reached a long-term agreement for "the development of agriculture and economy"; the projects embraced under the agreement include not only rubber but the further development of Haiti's banana plantations, the planting of oil crops, drug plants, spices, fiber plants, the stimulation of handicraft industries, and the development of forestry resources peculiar to the tropics. A further extension of an additional $500,000 in credits will be made for use on highways, irrigation projects, and to provide transportation facilities for the areas to be planted to rubber trees.

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United Kingdom, the United States, and Haiti, in proportion to population, were 185, 165, and 125,[18] yet Haiti had no carrying trade while the other two countries had, and so the profits were drained from the land.[19]

In short, as Haiti became accustomed to managing her own affairs, she became content with—or at least, reconciled to—little things. Inertia and tradition worked in their persistent fashion, with no effective stimulation from outside to combat them. From tradition and seclusion springs prejudice, and this became obvious whenever a change was proposed, particularly one which suggested bringing white people back to the country. To the élite it might mean the end of their social supremacy; to the masses, the end of their independence of daily action. The prejudice against sugar making was rooted in the same kind of suspicion. When a large landowner tried to institute a sugar mill on his estate, he met an adamant refusal of his hired workers to labor in it: "*Moué pas esclave!*" (I'm no slave!) The Negroes even disliked a bell to ring them to work on a plantation, for it suggested the slavery of the old régime.

Just before the Civil War in the United States a humanitarian gentleman developed a project of conducting numerous free American Negroes to Haiti in a planned migration. He discussed in a pamphlet[20] all the possible trades which might flourish in that country, if the migrants were to assume the position of a middle class; but his list is significantly small—sixteen occupations, on the order of tailoring, coopering, and blacksmithing, were all he could think of.[21] He made three comments which he hoped would attract the Negro Americans, as to a virgin field of opportunity: that in the

18. John Candler, *Brief Notices of Hayti*, pp. 111–113, cites these figures, and says: "[Thus] Hayti, poor, and despised as she is, has a commerce, *in native produce*, nearly three-fourths as large, *in proportion to her population*, as our own United Kingdom, which is the great manufacturing part of the world; and seven-eighths as large as that of the United States, where the staple exports are produced by the labour of 3,000,000 slaves!"

19. Mackenzie (*Communications Received at the Foreign Office* [of Great Britain] *Relative to Hayti*, Document V) reports that in 1825 exports were valued at $5,793,758, and imports at $4,660,174; the trading was carried on in 552 *foreign* ships, of which 374 were American, 78 British, and 65 French. No Haitian ship traded abroad.

20. Benjamin S. Hunt, *Remarks on Hayti as a Place of Settlement for Afric-Americans*. See particularly pp. 3–9.

21. His complete list is: tailor, shoemaker, baker, cabinetmaker, carpenter, mason, lime-burner, distiller, cooper, wheelwright, saddler, blacksmith, tinner, hatter, small-boat maker, potter.

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towns there was a surplus of shopkeepers, but nothing like enough producers of goods; that in the country few Haitians of intelligence and capital paid any attention to agriculture; and that Haiti needed more than anything else people of brains, not afraid of physical activity, and people with capital. The author had observed well. His characterization of the Haiti of 1860 was still true fifty years later.

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XVII

OUTER ASPECTS OF HAITI

[538] HAITIAN poets rarely sing the beauty of their native land, nor do the travelers who roam the earth dwell long upon this particular pearl of the Antilles. Mountains slope down into the sea, sunlight sparkles upon the foaming waves as they roll in, peninsulas and bays lend variety to the coast line: yet the majestic display does not make the visitor cherish Haiti in his mind and heart alongside Sicily or Scotland or Maine or Japan. Columbus in 1492 thought the island "enchanting," saying that "it is a wonder. Its mountains and plains, and meadows and fields, are so beautiful and rich for planting and sowing, and rearing cattle of all kinds, and for building towns and villages" that it "surpasses anything that would be believed by one who had not seen it."[1] The Spanish admiral viewed his discoveries with the eye of faith, seeing the glories which might come to be; his enthusiasm was matched by other early Spaniards. The French in the eighteenth century likewise thought the land beautiful, and with skillful management made their human habitations an ornament to generous nature.

105 If one could view Haiti only from the sea or from the air, he would probably, like the Spaniards and Frenchmen, speak in rhapsodies, for the land still stands up out of the sea—"the highest peak of that submerged mountain range whose summits appear as the islands of the Greater Antilles."[2] Visitors disembark from their ships or planes, however, see the poverty, the backwardness, the pathetic smallness of human effort which matches so ill with what nature originally provided, and come away with a feeling of disappointment. Not even the little things of Haiti are immediately attractive: the peasants are not "quaint," their costumes are not "picturesque," their towns are not "colorful"; even the souvenirs to take back to the tourist ship have likely as not been made in New York and imported by the local shops. Outsiders, distracted by the human element, hardly glance at the scenery; and since as conducted tourists they are not likely to penetrate far beyond the seacoast, or stay long enough

1. Christopher Columbus, *Select Letters*, R. H. Major, ed. (London, 1870), p. 3.
2. Blair Niles, *Black Haiti*, p. 6.

3: Leyburn Z-4, 5 (no date) 1966
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105 to regard the people as neighbors, their first impression is generally
13 their abiding one.

13 And yet the land has its memorable beauties. To lie at anchor in the harbor at Port-au-Prince early in the morning and watch the long arm of the southern peninsula turn gradually from purple vagueness to brilliant green as the sun rises back of the capital; to see a tiny ship with its patched and colored sail glide quietly by on its way out to the island of La Gonâve, lying twenty miles to the west, like a morsel about to be swallowed by the open jaws of the "mainland"; to hear the morning noises drifting across the water, with a snatch of song or laughter in the air; to watch Port-au-Prince come to life, white and sparkling as the sun strikes it—this is the proper introduction to Haiti. Beyond the capital are the hills and mountains; if one will take the time, he may look back as he climbs and see not only the whiteness of the city, but the gracious sweep of the harbor, and the peninsula losing itself in the western distance. He will think without apology of a lesser Naples, and will not miss Vesuvius. Within the country is every variety of scenery: high mountains whose peaks are frequently shrouded in misty clouds; ranges of lower mountains ("*morne*" is the eloquent Haitian name for them) which can be melancholy, kindly, or forbidding, as the spirit of the traveler wills; dull wastes of salt marshes; arid deserts where cactus grows, spiked and hairy, to enormous heights; canyons, waterfalls, dried-up streams; moors, little jungles, farms; rich plantations of sugar cane, dusty stretches of sheer barrenness—everything, in fact, from majesty to complete insipidity. Rarely can one find such utter diversity in a small space as in Haiti. One might fancy himself successively on Egdon Heath, in an Arizona desert, among the Dakota Bad Lands, in old Saint-Domingue, in tropical Africa, in the Pyrenees.

361 The sad truth remains: nothing that man has done in Haiti for a
[342] century and a quarter has been worthy of the landscape. A few government buildings in Port-au-Prince are passable, and the city as a whole is not a blemish; yet not to have seen it is to have missed no great aesthetic experience. Elsewhere the towns and villages run the gamut from monotonous small-scale structures to mere collections
311 of shanties. Great gashes have been cut in the forests by generations of earth-hungry peasants who needed farms. Much of the land looks poor; indeed, thousands of once fertile acres are now beyond any use at all, grown up in cactus, because of overuse and misuse for-

3: Leyburn Z-4, 5 (no date) 1966
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merly. Wherever the overcrowded Haitians have lived since 1815, there beauty has had to give way to gnawing necessity which lacked either the imagination or the means to be sightly.

One can stand upon a morne and watch a rain storm rush down the valley, bending the palm trees in its fury, and think Haiti still a magnificent sight. Then one must descend the mountainside past rickety shacks and rocky fields, and the feeling grows that not all the kindly simplicity of the people is enough to lift the country from its dilapidation. As he nears the village, the afternoon scent of roasting coffee will delight him; but then he sees the squalor of village life and is reminded that three million souls are here trying to eke out an existence upon a small area of declining fertility.

Much in Haiti is picturesque if one can keep his mind from wandering to the conditions which lie behind the picturesqueness. Women stride down from the hills with great loads on their heads; aged crones, pipe in mouth, sit perched on the haunches of tiny donkeys with their bulging panniers; the great market square in the town is a scene of noisy confusion with hundreds of women and children, a mixture of smells, thousands of little piles of soap, candy, gewgaws, vegetables, gaping chickens tied together by the feet, shirts, canes, bolts of cloth. All the weary women, however, must trudge back up to their shanties on the mountainside when the market is over. Many of them do not see ten dollars in cash during the year, and their little children, with bellies bulging, give evidence of undernourishment. Without doctors, without even the rudiments of hygiene, they manage somehow to subsist, or else die, frequently of disease which might easily have been prevented.

In Port-au-Prince and a few other towns live enough members of the élite to make one momentarily forget the plight of the masses. The houses of the well-to-do are substantially built, if not often attractive. Their garden walls are brilliant with bougainvillea, their walks with hibiscus. Tiny red lizards (analis) make flashes of color along the walls. On shady verandas and in the parlors one hears delightful conversation, eats excellent food, savors the pleasures of civilization. The clubs of the élite are pleasing, their tennis is good, their dancing graceful. To be among these families as a welcome guest is an experience in gracious hospitality which can never be forgotten. Too soon, however, one must leave these havens of urbanity and pass through districts of the town which haunt the mind with their grim want.

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mind dust, ruts, and a steady succession of bumps. To travel in the average hired car, driven by a Haitian, is one of the grim experiences of life. The driver speeds as if pursued by a demon, while the peasant pedestrians leap for safety into the ditches; the unfortunate passenger is moved to close his eyes to avoid seeing the inevitable crash which does not come. The most comfortable means of travel if one is going only to towns is by ship, for practically all of Haiti's towns are seaports.

To know the towns is still not to know Haiti, however, for two million or more Haitians live in the rural regions. These are the people. And if they are ignorant and not too clean, they are nevertheless models of kindly generosity. It is the proud boast even of the élite that one may travel the length and breadth of the land in perfect safety, in no danger of life or of personal property.

Many homely sights linger in the mind: women washing the family clothes in the stream, laughing and gossiping with their neighbors; men and women talking in animated fashion to themselves, arguing, cajoling, explaining as they walk along; individuals carrying a single flower, simply because it is beautiful; barefoot women, gnarled of hand and lined of face, kneeling in the Catholic church at prayer; taxi drivers who cruise by, hissing in order to attract the attention of a visitor who obviously can afford to ride instead of walk; an apparently ceaseless procession of patient donkeys, always laden, sometimes ridden by women, sometimes urged along from behind; the so-called buses each with its witty or its florid name (Plaisance, Éclair, Grâce-à-Dieu, Polichinelle, Sauve-qui-peut, Montparnasse), which like glorified buckboards jostle woodenly from the town to country hamlets; the winsome, open smile and gay laughter of a peasant boy; the ingratiating charm of a sleeping baby in the noise of the market place. To know the average Haitian is to feel a warm affection for him. His life is never easy, yet he bears it all with true beauty of spirit. If *le bon Dieu* sends distress, he will also make it possible for distress to be borne.

The people are polite, whether to each other or to strangers. A younger person greets an older one as *compère* or *commère*—literally, godfather or godmother; to his equal he says "*frère*" or "*m'sieu.*" Sometimes one sees a local patriarch instructing little children in "deportment." This courtesy extends to hospitality: a stranger is almost sure to be offered shelter and food wherever he stops.

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been murdered, as in 1937); and the Dominican influence can be seen in northeastern Haiti. The country as a whole, however, remains largely free from non-Haitian influence. This isolation may not continue for many more years, for successive administrations expand their health activities, try to improve economic methods, extend transportation facilities, and pursue policies of "enlightenment." Under such a regimen there will be an inevitable contact either with the experts from foreign countries or with the products of the civilization of those countries. And if Haiti should acquire foreign machines in large numbers, she would inevitably open herself to the dynamic influences which accompany a changing economy.

Such a possibility is in the near future, so that social scientists will shortly have the chance to observe cultural contact and diffusion at work. What is more immediately to the point is the query as to how much diffusion of cultural traits occurred at the beginning of Haitian national life. How much of the African tribal culture persisted through slavery and the period of forced labor into the Haiti of small properties and peasantry? How much, on the other hand, is a borrowing from the French ways of colonial times? These questions have been treated in earlier chapters, but may be here summarized. The external structure of social institutions, particularly those which characterize the life of the élite, is clearly French. Haitian government and law, upper-class marriage, the Catholic religion—all these have a French provenance. Conversely, among the masses, the Vodun religion and possibly certain economic devices (such as the coumbite) stem from Africa. Yet the round of daily life among the people is quite obviously unlike that of any single African group from which slaves were drawn, nor is it a composite of African folkways.[7] Similarly, although the bulk of the population is peasantry, the Haitian peasant is not at all a transplanted French peasant. The folkways and mores of rural Haiti are, to a degree unusual in most countries, products of local experience, uncolored by outside influence.[8]

Students of race find in writings about Haiti the usual sum of generalizations about the temperament and mental characteristics of

7. It must be emphasized that the Haitian slaves were drawn from at least thirty-eight African groups. See J. G. Leyburn, "The Making of a Black Nation," in G. P. Murdock, ed., *Essays in the Science of Society* (New Haven, 1937), pp. 377–394.

8. Herskovits' theory of the African origin of certain Haitian traits has been discussed above, pp. 199–201.